Debarring Higher Income Groups from PDS

500. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that out of 75 lakh tonnes of foodgrains supplied through PDS, only 35 lakh tonnes go to people below poverty line;

(b) whether Government purpose to debar people in higher income groups, such as those paying income tax, from getting the benefit of Public Distribution System; if so, the details of the proposal; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) No, Sir. Under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) introduced in June, 1997, out of the total annual allotment of foodgrains of 175 lakh tonnes, 72 lakh tonnes is earmarked for issue at specially subsidised prices to the people below poverty line (BPL) @ 10 kg. per family per month and 103 lakh tonnes is issued at Central Issue Prices (CIP) applicable to families above poverty line (APL). Additional, allocations of foodgrains to the States/UTs. At CIPs for APL families are also being made.

The off-take reported during 1998-99 (upto January, 1999) against BPL and APL quota including additional allocation was 49.14 and 105.67 lakh tonnes respectively.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The proposal to bar the access to the Public Distribution System (PDS) for the affluent sections of the society was discussed in the Conference of Chief Ministers on Basic, Minimum Services held during 4-5 July, 1996. The Conference, however, felt that as a large section of the population, who may be above the poverty line are also getting the benefit of PDS, suitable measures should be taken to ensure availability of essential commodities at reasonable prices to this section.

In the Conference of Chief Ministers and State Food Ministers held on 30.09.1997 to review implementation of TPDS, the general concensus was that there should be no reduction in allocation to the APL families.

It has not been possible to exclude people in the higher income groups from access to PDS because of the lack of consensus on this issue.

Financial assistance to Kerala for purchase of vans

501. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kerala Government has sought financial assistance of Rs. 128.28 lakhs for purchase of 24 vans under the centrally sponsored schemes for the areas not covered under Revamped Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The State Government of Kerala sought financial assistance of Rs. 128.28 lakhs for purchase of 24 vehicles under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of "Purchase of Vans/Trucks". The financial assistance is provided under the scheme for purchase of vans/trucks for use as mobile fair price shops (FPS) and for delivering PDS commodities at the doorstep of FPSs. From 1998-99 the scope of the scheme has been enlarged to include those areas also which were not covered under the erstwhile Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS). The State Government requested for financial assistance under the extended scope of the scheme.

The proposal has been approved and orders issued on 19th February, 1999 for